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ABSTRACT

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 1998 Civics Assessment found that 12th-graders who participated in volunteer service had higher scores than those who did not. Furthermore, 12th-graders who worked 6 to 15 hours a week had higher scores than those who either worked longer hours or did not work at all. (Contains two tables and Web sites for further information.) (MR)

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Student Jobs and Volunteer Service

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Student Jobs and Volunteer Service

Abstract: *The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 1998 Civics Assessment found that 12th-graders who participated in volunteer service had higher scores than those who did not. Furthermore, 12th-graders who worked 6 to 15 hours a week had higher scores than those who either worked longer hours or did not work at all.*

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has been administering NAEP assessments since 1969. In addition to assessing student performance, NCES administers background questionnaires to students.

In the 1998 Civics Assessment, NCES added questions about student employment and participation in volunteer service. These questions were asked of 12th-grade students only. As table 1 indicates, 12th-graders who reported participating in volunteer work in their community had higher scores than those who reported that they had not engaged in volunteer work.¹ Twenty-seven percent said they had engaged in volunteer work in connection with their school, and 31 percent said they had done so on their own.

Table 1.—Percentage of students and average civics scale scores by volunteer work status, grade 12: 1998

Did you do volunteer work in your community this year?	Percentage of students	Average scale score
Yes, with my school	27	159*
Yes, on my own	31	158*
No	43	141

* Higher than "No."
NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.
SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Civics Assessment.

As table 2 indicates, 65 percent of all 12th-graders reported working at a job for pay during the school year, and 38 percent reported working more than 15 hours a week. Those 12th-graders who reported working 6 to 15 hours a week (some 20 percent of the whole) had higher scores than the 36 percent who said they did not work at all and the 38 percent who said they worked more. The scores of students who reported working 1 to 5 hours a week were not significantly different either from the scores of students who were not working at all or from those who were working 6 to 15 hours a week.

Conclusion

The data presented in this issue of *NAEPfacts* indicate that involvement with volunteer work is associated with higher scores among 12th-graders on the

Table 2.—Percentage of students and average civics scale scores by hours per week working at a job for pay, grade 12: 1998

How many hours to you work at a job for pay?	Percentage of students	Average scale score
None	36	152‡
1–5 hours	7	155‡
6–10 hours	9	157*†‡
11–15 hours	11	159*†‡
16–20 hours	17	152‡
21 or more hours	21	142

* Higher than "None." † Higher than "16–20 hours."
‡ Higher than "21 or more hours."
NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.
SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Civics Assessment.

NAEP civics assessment, as is participation in a moderate level of paid employment. At the same time, students who work more than 15 hours a week show lower scores than some other students, at least in civics, and those who work more than 20 hours have scores that are lower than any other group.

Endnote

¹ Only statistically significant differences are discussed in this issue of *NAEPfacts*. "Statistically significant" means that observed differences are unlikely to be due to chance factors associated with sampling variability. All differences reported are significant at the .05 level with appropriate adjustments for multiple comparisons.

For Further Information

The NAEP 1998 Civics Report Card, NCES 2000-457, is the complete report. Copies may be obtained over the World Wide Web (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearchpubsinfo.asp?pubid=2000457>)

The text of the Report Card and additional information about the Civics Assessment, including sample

questions, may be obtained from the NAEP World Wide Web Home Page (see below).

NAEPfacts briefly summarize findings from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The series is a product of the National Center for Education Statistics, Gary Phillips, Acting Commissioner, and Peggy Carr, Associate Commissioner for Education Assessment. This issue of *NAEPfacts* was prepared by **Carol Johnson** of NCES and **Alan Vanneman** of the Education Statistics Services Institute, based on previously published material.

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